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SUBJECT: NEW DODIK GOVERNMENT: MOST MINISTERS REMAIN

¶1. (SBU) The RS National Assembly (RSNA) elected Milorad Dodik for a second consecutive term as Republika Srpska (RS) Premier November 30, by a vote of 60 to 18 with 2 abstentions. Dodik and his government slate received the support of his own Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), Mladen Ivanic's Party of Democratic Progress (PDP), the Democratic People's Alliance (DNS), the Socialist Party (SP) the Bosniak Party of Democratic Action (SDA) and Party for BiH (SBiH). Dodik's new cabinet includes 11 holdovers from his previous RS Government, including in key ministries like Finance and Interior. Moreover, because of the size of his victory in general elections held October 1, Dodik's SNSD holds two more ministries than it did in the past. As in Dodik's previous term, the new RS Government includes a core group of key ministers who are Dodik insiders as well as several others with ministerial experience in past RS Governments. Unlike Dodik's previous mandates as RS Premier, this RS Government will have the support of a super-majority in the RSNA and should have little difficulty finding support for its RS legislative priorities.

¶2. (U) The main points of Dodik's governing agenda have been reported septel. Capsule biographies of Dodik and his ministers appear below.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THE NEW RS GOVERNMENT

¶3. (SBU) RS Premier: Milorad Dodik, SNSD -- Dodik is the son of a farmer from the Krajina municipality of Laktasi. A graduate of Belgrade's Faculty of Political Sciences, he began his political career as Mayor of Laktasi from 1986-1990, and was at that time the youngest mayor in former Yugoslavia. In 1990 he was elected to the Parliament of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and during the war years served as a member of the RSNA. Founder of the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), Dodik was RS Premier from 1998-2001 as leader of the Sloga Coalition, and held the position again from February to November 2006. His October election victory confirmed opinion polls suggesting that Dodik is by far the most popular politician in the RS. This is in no small measure thanks to his direct, populist manner of speaking. Not particularly detail-oriented, Dodik can quickly seize on concepts he likes and doggedly stick to them. A basketball fan, Dodik owns the 2005-06 RS Cup Champion squad Igokea, which is based in Aleksandrovac, Laktasi Municipality, where Dodik lives. Dodik, 46, is married with two children, and is grandfather of one. He does not speak English.

¶4. (SBU) RS Minister of Interior: Stanislav Cadjo, SNSD -- A close and trusted friend of Dodik, Cadjo, 44, grew up in Dodik's home village of Aleksandrovac. He graduated from Banja Luka University Law School and has held a series of jobs, mostly in business, some in politics. Cadjo worked in the Laktasi Municipal Administration from 1986-1991, largely during Dodik's mayoral mandate. He served in the VRS from March 1993 to June 1996, and shortly thereafter started working as Director of Tehnogas Trn (a Laktasi firm privatized by the Italian company SOA). Cadjo has served as campaign manager for SNSD and as a member of the party's Executive Board and as RS Minister of Interior in Dodik's most recent term. Perhaps protecting his own bureaucratic turf, Cadjo has proven rather strident on the issue of police reform. While Dodik, and not Cadjo, will make the ultimate decisions for the RS on police reform, it would be a mistake to underestimate the role Cadjo could play as a spoiler. Cadjo, an ethnic Serb, is married and the father of two children. He does not speak English.

¶5. (SBU) RS Minister of Finance: Aleksandar Dzombic, SNSD -- Dzombic, 38 and an ethnic Serb from Banja Luka, graduated from Banja Luka University in 1995. After a year as an IT expert in the Banja Luka Municipality, Dzombic began his career in the RS banking sector. From 1996-2002 Dzombic worked at Banja Luka's Kristal Banka, first as Credit Officer managing credit portfolios for IC loans to the SME sector and later as Manager of the bank's Financial Assets and IT Department. Since 2003 Dzombic has been Executive Director of Nova Banka, Bijeljina. In his first nine months

as RS MinFin, Dzombic has doggedly defended RS priorities on the Indirect Taxation Association Governing Board. He also worked closely with USAID experts to adopt individual income tax and corporate profit tax reforms. Dzombic is married, with one child.

¶6. (SBU) RS Minister of Economy and Energy: Dr. Rajko Ubiparip, SNSD -- Ubiparip, the new RS Minister of Economy and Energy, is 43 and an ethnic Serb. He was born September 24, 1963 in Jasenovi Potoci, Mrkonjic Grad. After completing high school in Mrkonjic Grad and a bachelor's degree in economics from Banja Luka University, he began to work for

SARAJEVO 00003090 002 OF 003

the Modrica Oil Refinery. He subsequently earned an M.A. in economics from Banja Luka University (1998) and a Ph.D. from the University of Kragujevac, Serbia (2004). Most of his scientific publications have been on the issues of marketing and quality management systems. He succeeded Milan Jelic as General Director of the Modrica Oil Refinery when Jelic became RS Minister of Economy and Energy earlier in 2006.

¶7. (SBU) RS Minister of Education and Culture: Anton Kasipovic, SNSD -- Kasipovic, an ethnic Croat, will remain in the post of RS Minister of Education and Culture, and will serve once again as Deputy RS Premier. He spent most of his professional career in journalism. Together with Zeljko Kopanja and Nikola Guzijan, Kasipovic helped to found Banja Luka's &Nezavisne Novine.⁸ Kasipovic served as Marketing Director of &Glas Srpske⁸ and as Editor in Chief and Marketing Director of its predecessor &Glas.⁸ Immediately prior to joining Dodik's RS Government earlier this year, Kasipovic served as Marketing Director for BH TV and as Director of BH TV's Banja Luka Studio. While not technically a member of SNSD, Kasipovic is definitely a Dodik insider. He is considered to be an excellent manager with a strong sense for business. His priorities for this term are thought to include a rationalization of higher education in the RS.

¶8. (SBU) RS Minister of Health and Social Protection: Dr. Ranko Skrbic, SNSD -- Skrbic, an ethnic Serb, returns to the government as Minister of Health and Social Protection. Skrbic is extremely close to Dodik, both personally and professionally. He is Dodik's kum (a term that signifies an extremely close relationship denoting that he was either Dodik's best man or godfather to his children, or both). Like Cadjo, Skrbic hails from Dodik's home village of Aleksandrovac, Laktasi Municipality. Skrbic is a pharmacologist and was active in the Banja Luka Municipal Board of SNSD. Like Dodik, Skrbic is an avid basketball fan, and played the game semi-professionally. He is married and speaks English.

¶9. (SBU) RS Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Government: Zoran Lipovac, SNSD -- Born in Banja Luka in 1954, Lipovac, an ethnic Croat, received his secondary education in Zagreb and a bachelor's degree from the Banja Luka University Law Faculty in 1978. His previous experience includes work as a legal expert with the United Nations (1998-2004) as well as service as a Basic Court Judge (1986-1995) and Deputy Chief District Prosecutor (2004 to the present). Lipovac lived for two years in the United States and speaks English. He is married and the father of two.

¶10. (SBU) RS Minister of Justice: Dzerard Selman, Non-partisan -- Selman, an ethnic Bosniak, was born in 1958 in Kotor Varos, and is a graduate of the Banja Luka University's Faculty of Law. Prior to his first stint as RS Minister of Justice under Premier Pero Bukejlovic (2005-2006) he worked in the Judge Adjutant General's Office of the JNA's First Army District, Belgrade, and as secretary and general director in the firm Jelsingrad-Kotor Varos. He is married and has two children.

¶11. (SBU) RS Minister of Refugees and Displaced Persons: Omer Brankovic, SDA -- Brankovic, 59 and an ethnic Bosniak, is a veterinarian by training, originally from Visegrad. He has been active in politics for about ten years, serving as Deputy Mayor of Visegrad, RSNA MP, and as RS Deputy Premier and Minister of Economic Coordination. Following his service as Minister of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Dodik's most recent RS Government, he was re-nominated and reconfirmed for an additional term in this post. While he served as Dodik's Deputy Premier in his most recent mandate, it is likely that he will be replaced in this position by Minister Jasna Brkic. Sources say that Brankovic's re-nomination is based on an agreement between SDA and SNSD that SNSD be represented in the Federation BiH Government at the head of one ministry. Should this fail to materialize, Brankovic could be sacked. Brankovic is married with two sons.

¶12. (U) RS Minister of Agriculture: Dr. Radivoje Bratic, SNSD -- Bratic, 54 and an ethnic Serb, was born in Nevesinje. He is a civil engineer by training with a specialization in water resource issues. Prior to the war, Bratic worked at Sarajevo's water utility and taught at Sarajevo University's Civil Engineering Faculty. Since the war, he

has held positions in the RS Water Directorate and the RS Water Institute, the High Technical School in Uzice (Serbia) and at Banja Luka University's Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering. He is married and the father of two daughters and currently lives in Trebinje.

SARAJEVO 00003090 003 OF 003

¶13. (U) RS Minister of Urban Planning and Ecology: Fatima Fetibegovic, Non-partisan -- Fetibegovic, 57 and an ethnic Bosniak, returns for a second term as Minister of Urban Planning. She was born in Bihać, educated at Belgrade University's Faculty of Architecture and currently lives in Prijedor. She has thirty years experience as both a lead designer and head of a construction team at Prijedor's & Industro Projekat,⁸ and has also worked on city planning and regulatory issues in Prijedor. She is married and the mother of two.

¶14. (SBU) RS Minister of Trade and Tourism: Predrag Gluhakovic, Socialist Party -- Gluhakovic, 52 and an ethnic Croat, returns as RS Minister of Trade and Tourism. He was born in Bijela, near Brčko, and completed technical and university education in Serbia. He has worked in several businesses, including &Unis Mibo,⁸ &Soko Pirometal⁸ and &ODP Zitopromet.⁸ Immediately prior to his first term as minister, he worked as a manager for the Brčko utility &Elektrodistribucija.⁸ During his first term as minister, he was treated for serious back pain.

¶15. (SBU) RS Minister of Economic Relations and Coordination: Jasna Brkic, non-partisan -- Brkic, 47 and an ethnic Bosniak, returns for a second term as RS Minister of Economic Relations and Coordination. Brkic moved from the periphery to a position of trust during Dodik's most recent term as RS Premier. This is evidenced by her likely nomination as Deputy RS Premier, succeeding Omer Brankovic. Brkic has experience both in the academy, teaching at Banja Luka University's Economics Faculty, and as a journalist at Banja Luka Radio. She has also served in Banja Luka's Municipal Assembly. She is married and the mother of one.

¶16. (SBU) RS Minister of Youth, Families and Sport: Dr. Proko Dragosavljevic, SNSD -- Dragosavljevic, 58 and an ethnic Serb, was born in Srbac. He received a B.A. from the Physical Education Faculty of the University of Sarajevo, did graduate work at Novi Sad University, and completed his Ph.D. at the University of Eastern Sarajevo. He has previously worked as both a high school teacher and principal. His previous political experience includes service as mayor of Srbac and as Deputy RS Minister of Education in Dodik's 1998-2000 RS Government. The minister responsible for youth issues, Dragosavljevic is the oldest member of Milorad Dodik's cabinet.

¶17. (SBU) RS Minister of Transport and Communications: Nedeljko Cubrilovic, DNS -- Cubrilovic, 53 and an ethnic Serb, is a mechanical engineer returning for a second term as RS Minister of Transport and Communications. Following his first term, Cubrilovic led the DNS party list for the RSNA from the electoral district that includes Banja Luka. His presence on the list helped DNS achieve its best electoral result ever, 4 RSNA mandates. In addition to experience as an engineer, Cubrilovic once led the RS Directorate for Roads and was Chairman of the Banja Luka Executive Board. He is married and the father of two.

¶18. (SBU) RS Minister of Labor and Veterans Affairs: Bosko Tomic, PDP -- Tomic, 57 and an ethnic Serb, also returns for a second term. He was born in Trnovo and graduated from the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo. Tomic spent most of his professional career in the "FAMOS" motor factory in Sarajevo; he was also active in trade union affairs. Tomic served in the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) from 1992-1995. Immediately prior to his first term in the ministry, he served as Deputy Director of the RS Employment Agency. He is married and the father of two.

¶19. (SBU) RS Minister of Science and Technology: Dr. Bakir Ajanovic, Non-partisan -- Ajanovic, 53, a Bosniak born in Banja Luka, is returning for his second term as minister. Ajanovic holds both Bosnian and U.S. citizenship and is a surgeon who has worked in the medical field both in Banja Luka and in Garland, Texas. Originally proposed by the Party for BiH (SBiH), Ajanovic recently announced that he left the party and was consequently reappointed as minister by Milorad Dodik.

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